Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

The Spirit's Groans for Glory
Scripture: Romans 8:26-27
Code: 45-63

Let's open our Bibles now as we come to a time in God's precious Word, a sacred, holy privilege it is indeed to study together. Romans 8 is the text we've been dealing with for some months in our wonderful adventure in the Epistle to the Romans. We're looking in the section from Verses 17 through 30 as a broad section of truth considering several individual emphasis as the Apostle Paul writes in this glorious portion of this Epistle.

As we approach the eighth chapter of Romans again, let me just see if I can't set your thinking down a very important track. One of the most thrilling and hopeful sometimes in the Scripture is found in 1 Peter 1:5. And in that verse, it says this, it says, "Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto Salvation." It's speaking about believers. And it says we are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

As Christians, our basic confidence, our basic comfort, our basic source of joy and peace is a hope in eternal life, a hope in eternal glory that nothing can ever altar, that nothing can ever change, that nothing can ever take away. So because that is our hope and that is our joy and that is our confidence and our comfort and our peace, it's wonderful to know that we who are Christians are indeed kept by His power unto salvation. That is the confidence that we as Christians have, that if we know Christ we are kept by the power of God in that relationship.

Now that verse also reminds us of something else. It says we are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. And as we've been trying to say in the chapter, our salvation is not yet fully complete. We still look forward to salvation as Romans 13 says, "Now is our salvation nearer than when we believed." In other words, there is a future dimension of salvation for which we still wait, which we still anticipate, we haven't yet received. Our salvation is not complete until we come to glorification.

Look at Verse 29 for a moment. "For whom He did for know, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His son." In other words, an eternity past God predestinated. And His predestination encompasses the fact that we would ultimately be made into the image of His son. Therefore, Verse 30 says, "Whom He did predestinate, He called. And whom He called, He justified. And whom He justified, them He also glorified."

And so we, who are justified, have only to wait for our final glorification. We are kept by the power of God. Now that basically is a theme that theologians have called the doctrine of eternal security or the perseverance of the saints. And it emphasizes what I suppose is the vernacular expression, "Once saved, always saved." But a better way to say it would be, "Once having entered salvation, to see salvation complete." Because that's essentially what Scripture is teaching.

And Scripture clearly establishes the fact that those who have begun will come to completion. Or to put it another way in the terms of Paul, "He that hath begun a good work in You will," what? "Perform it until," when? "The day of Jesus Christ." So what has begun must come to completion. That, the Scripture emphasizes.

I love what the puritan, Thomas Watson, said. "The exercise of grace may be hindered as when the course of water is stopped. The Godly may act faintly in religion. The pulse of their affections may be low. Instead of grace working in the Godly, corruption may work. Instead of patience, murmuring. Instead of Heavenliness, earthliness. Thus, lively and vigorous may corruption be in the regenerate.

"They may fall into enormous sins. But though their grace may be drawn low, it is not drawn dry. Though grace may be abated, it is not abolished. Grace may suffer and eclipse, not a dissolution. A believer may fall from some degrees of grace, but not from the state of grace," end quote.

Now why is this? Why? Why is it that once having entered into salvation and begun, we will see it to completion? Why is it that Jesus says, "All the Father gives to Me shall come to Me and I have lost none of them," John 6? Why is it that when one comes to Him, He keeps that one throughout all eternity? He sees that all the way through time and eternity that soul is kept in His care? The answer is because the Trinity secures the believer. That's a great theological truth.

The trinity -- that is God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit, are all involved in securing the believer. Now first of all, the Bible teaches us that God the Father secures us. Many texts -- one that you're perhaps unfamiliar with is 2 Corinthians 1:21. "Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and has anointed us is God who hath also sealed us and given us the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts."

Boy, that's a great Word. The one who has established us, anointed us, sealed us, given us the guarantee of the spirit is none other than God, the Father. So the reason we are secure is because God the Father secures us. How "bout 2 Timothy 2:19? "Nevertheless, the foundation of God standeth sure having this seal," here's the seal that seals our ultimate redemption, "the Lord knows them that are His."

You know why we're secure? Because God, the Father knows who belongs to Him. And however belongs to Him, belongs to Him forever. Great truth. So we are secured in the security of God the

Father. Secondly, we are secured in the security of God the Son. God the Son is involved in that.

Look at 1 Corinthians 1. Not 2 Corinthians this time, but 1 Corinthians 1. And listen to this. It says in Verse 6 that, "The testimony of Christ was confirmed in you. The testimony of Christ confirmed in you." Now follow this. "So that you come behind in no gift," listen now, "waiting for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ."

Now, we have received the testimony of Christ. It was confirmed in us. We know wait for His coming. We have already been justified. We wait to be glorified. And it says, "The Lord Jesus Christ who shall also confirm you unto the end that you may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ." Isn't that great?

Christ Himself confirms us that we may be held blameless until the day of Jesus Christ. You say, "What if I sin?" Your sin is immediately covered and you're held blameless. Your sin is paid for by Christ. You're held blameless. So we are sealed by the Father, we are confirmed by the Son. Just a marvelous, marvelous truth.

And then God, the Holy Spirit gets involved also. Ephesians 1 says in Verse 13, "We are sealed with the Holy Spirit." God seals our security by the agency of the Holy Spirit. But note this, 1 Thessalonians 5:23, "And the God of peace sanctify you holy. And I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless under the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Paul says, "The God of peace sanctify you holy." In other words, take you all the way to sanctification, all the way to glorification, your whole spirit, your whole soul, your body, all that your are be preserved blameless to the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. You say, "Will it happen?" Yes.

The next verse, "Faithful is He that called you that also will," what? "Do it." that's confidence. Let me tell you something, folks. The idea that you can lose your salvation is absolutely heretical and foreign to the teaching of the Scriptures. It just can't be there. It would obviate the work of the Father, the work of the Son, and the work of the Spirit.

The Father established the fact that you're His, and that's forever. The Son confirms that and keeps you blameless. And the Spirit of God works it out in you accomplishing the will of God, the purpose of Christ. So those who have been saved are being saved and ultimately will be fully saved when they reach glorification.

Look with me for a moment at Hebrews 6. And I want to stress this truth from this very important and wonderful passage. Hebrews 16:16, and then we'll back into Romans 8. Hebrews 6:16 says, "For men verily swear by the greater," when men want to make an oath they swear by something greater than themselves. That was pretty much the Hebrew tradition. You swear by the temple or you swear

by God's name or you swear by Heaven or whatever.

So, "They swear by the greater and an oath for confirmation is to them and end of all strife." In other words, if a guy says he's arguing and they're scrapping about something the guy says, "Look, you can take my word for it. I swear by Heaven or by the temple or by God, something greater than myself," that ends the debate. Well God has also made a vow.

Verse 17, "Wherein God willing more abundantly to show unto you the errs of promise. The immutability of His counsel confirmed it by an oath." Now if men want to affirm their word by taking oaths, God more abundantly, to show to us the errs of promise, the immutability -- that means the never changing of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath.

In other words, God wanted us to know that He's not gonna change His mind either. He's not gonna change His promise. He's not gonna change His saving vow. And so by two unchangeable immutable things -- that is the promise of God and the oath of God in which it was impossible for God to what? To lie, "We might have a strong hope who have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hopes set before us." Which hope?

Verse 19 says, "Is for us," a what? "An anchor of the soul, sure and steadfast. And that anchor reaches all the way into the Holy of Holies in Heaven in to the presence of the high priest who is the high priest forever, Jesus," Says Verse 20. Boy, incredible passage. When you were given the promise of salvation, God made a promise and got made an oath, and that doubly bound God. And God is a God who cannot lie.

And we have a strong consolation as we lay hold of salvation because our anchor is the sure and steadfast Word of God. That's a great confidence, a great confidence. Now with all those marvelous passages on security, let's go back to Romans 8. I still feel this is the best. This is the most glorious.

The supreme revelation in Scripture of the security of the grace of salvation that once you enter into salvation you are kept there forever. That is the whole theme of the chapter. Verse 1, "There is therefore now no," what? "No condemnation." No, and there never will be any condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus. If there's no condemnation folks, there's no condemnation.

And if you're in Christ and there's no condemnation then there's nothing that could ever cause you to be put out of Christ because there's nothing to condemn you. The chapter ends with the same confidence, Verse 34. "Who is He that condementh?" Who is he? Christ? He died, ye that has risen again? Or is it the right hand of God who makes intercession for you? Is our intercessor going to condemn us? Of course not.

We say, "Well, maybe He'll stop loving us. He'll stop caring for us then He'll condemn us." Well, that's what Verse 35's written to straighten out. What'll separate us from the love of Christ? What's gonna change His attitude toward us? Tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril sword? No.

Verse 38, "Not death, life, angels, principalities, powers, things present, things to come, height, depth, any other creation shall be able to do," what? "Separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." No condemnation. This is the no-condemnation chapter.

This whole chapter is all about the security of the believer. And the part in between Verse 1 and Verse 34 stresses why we are secure. We are secure not only by the promise of God, not only by the oath of God, not only by the work of Christ, but particularly in this chapter, by the ongoing ministry of whom? The Holy Spirit. And so we've titled the chapter, "Life in the Spirit." The better title would be, "Security in the Spirit. Security in the Spirit."

"Just as the Holy Spirit," according to Verses 2 and 3, "freed us from sin and death." According to Verse 4, "Fulfills the Law." According to Verses 5 to 11, "Changes our nature." According to Verses 12 and 13, "Empowers our victory." According to Verses 14 to 16, "Confirms our adoption." "Just as the Holy Spirit does all of that to secure us," in Verses 17 to 30, "He guarantees our glory." That's an incredible passage. So full of hope. So full of joy. So full of consolation and promise. The Holy Spirit guarantees our glory. Great section.

Now as we look at Verses 17 to 30, the guarantee of glory, we have noted there are three parts. "The incomparable gains of glory." We studied those in Verses 17 and 18. "The inexpressible groans of glory," Verses 19 to 27. And then 28 to 30, "The infallible guarantee of glory." Now we're in Point Two. We're looking at the inexpressible groans of glory. Here is the sighing and the groaning that comes from those in an undesirable falleness, longing for glory, longing for the removal of the curse.

And first of all, we said in Verses 19 to 22, "Creation groans waiting for redemption." And then we saw that in Verses 23 to 25, "Believers groan." You see creating groaning in Verse 22. And then in Verse 23, "We ourselves also groan." Same word. And the groan is the sighing of who longs for glory. And the whole creation, we said, is bound up in the glorious liberation of the children of God.

And when the day of glory comes for God's people, there's gonna be a rejuvenation of the whole earth and the Heavens as well. And so creation is personified as groaning. And believers are groaning. And you experience that in your own life as you long for the fulfillment of that which is promised to you in Christ. You long for the day of glory.

And thirdly, the Holy Spirit groans. In Verse 26 and 27, it says, "The Sprit makes intercession for us with groanings which can't be uttered." The creation groans. The believer groans. And the Holy

Spirit groans. And here we find the Holy Spirit who is involved in this groaning process, sighing over the undesirable fallenness of man and the earth and the universe. Longing for the Glorious liberation of the children of God, as Verse 21 calls it. Longing for the manifestation of the Sons of God, as Verse 19 labels it.

And we come, then, to Verses 26 and 27 to finish up our look at the inexpressible groans for glory, the groaning of the Holy Spirit. Now this section is profound. It's so profound that we really don't understand it ultimately. We can sort of play around on the surface. But we don't really understand these groanings. We'll do the best we can. It is a deep passage. It is a profound one. It is a rich one.

Every time I open to this passage I sort of expect my Bible to bleed because this passage has been cut to ribbons so many times. So misunderstood. It is a glorious encouragement, beloved. It is an amazing encouragement because what it says is this, that we, as believers, who are sensing the weight of our fallenness, who are groaning in these human bodies, waiting for the ultimate redemption of our body. Our soul's been redeemed.

We're waiting for the redeemed body, aren't we? We're waiting to get out of our flesh, our fallenness, and enter into glory. It says that the Spirit of God is in us groaning for the same thing. So we are secure in the plan of the Father. We are secure and the purpose of the Son. And we are secure in the progress and power of the Spirit, as He, too, longs that we would be glorified.

Isn't it wonderful to know that when you say, "Oh, I'm such a sinner. Oh, wretched man that I am, who's gonna deliver me from the body of this debt," the Holy Spirit isn't there saying, "Why don't ya shape up, Mac?" *(Laughs)*The Holy Spirit is there groaning the same groan because He understands. Now when you talk about the groanings which cannot be uttered, immediately many of us think about the Charismatics who say this means speaking in tongues.

They say this is a verse that advocates gibberish. In the first place, it isn't us speaking, it's the Spirit. And it isn't even the Spirit speaking, because He's making groans which can't be uttered. It certainly isn't grunts that can be uttered. You have the Holy Spirit groaning in an un-uttered way.

You can't confuse that with people grunting in an uttered way, to say nothing of the fact that nothing in the context is remotely related to that kind of thinking, which doesn't seem to bother some people, strangely enough. Look at the Verse 26 and we'll start there.

The word "likewise" just like creation and believers, just like we groan, the Spirit also. Isn't it amazing? When you become a Christian, it's so wonderful to know God's on your side. He's on your side. I think some Christians sort of go through their Christian life like this, flinching, waiting to get blasted by God for every small thing they do wrong.

Well there is a sense in which God rebukes and chases His own. But keep in mind, too, that our fallenness and our humanness is as much a concern of the Spirit of God as it is our concern. And that when we groan and say, "Oh God, this is a debilitating way to live. I long that my spirit should be set free and that I should ascend to the full capability of the redeemed soul. I want to get rid of this flesh, this humanness that binds me down and trips me up," the Spirit is no less groaning the same groan. That's wonderfully comforting to me.

That's wonderfully comforting. The only time moves in to discipline us is when we get happy with our sin and keep doing it. As long as we groan that we should be delivered, the Spirit of God is eagerly groaning with us. What an amazing thought. What a security that is. He unites with our desire to be free from the flesh and receive full salvation.

So listen, our security is not simply something that was planned sometime and just happens because it was planned. It was planned. And a salvation that is secure was given us by Christ. God planned the secure salvation. Christ gave a secure salvation. And the Holy Spirit works it out.

In other words, you're secure not just because of a plan, and not just because of a gift, but because of a plan, because of a gift, and because the Spirit of God maintains that. If for one moment, the Spirit of God took His hand off my life, I would lose my security no matter what the plan of God was. There is an ongoing work of the Spirit of God that fits in here. And we don't want to miss that.

I don't understand how all of these factors work within God's marvelous plan, but I know that's what the Scripture teaches. It's almost as if now that I'm Christian I know my salvation is forever but I have to be kept saved. I do. I have to be kept saved. Now can I keep myself saved? Can I? No. Who's gonna keep me then? The Spirit of God. That's His unique work. As He intercedes on my behalf along with the Lord Jesus Christ.

You see, it's very much like -- let's see if I can give you an illustration. Go back to Luke 22 for a moment. Luke 22:31. And Jesus as a conversation with Peter. Whenever he acted like his old self, He called him by his old name, Simon. The Lord said, "Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have you." Say, "Wait a minute Lord. Don't You know the plan?" Satan can't have him. Rest easy. It's the sovereign plan. "Satan wants to have you, to sift you as wheat. Between I have prayed for you that your faith fail not."

You say, "Oh, come on. You don't need to pray. It's in the plan. You don't understand sovereignty very well, do you? You're not a very good Calvinist." *(Laughs)*You see, yes, it's in the plan, but the plan is carried out by the intersession of the son. Do you understand that? You can't divorce the plan from the work of the Son and the Spirit.

So He says, "I've prayed for you your faith fail not." Now you think God'll answer his prayer? Yeah. He says, "And when you're converted strengthen the brethren. I prayed for you that your faith won't fail in this trial. And then the trial's over and you're converted and you've changed and you've come out of this thing and you're okay, then use this as a way to strengthen others."

There is an illustration of the Lord praying for a believer. And you're not gonna sit back and say, "Well, he didn't know the plan. He didn't have to pray for the guy's security. He was secure anyway because that was the plan." No, no. God makes the plan and Son and the Spirit carry the plan out. And there is no plan if they don't do their work. You understand that? If for one moment Jesus stopped cleaning you from your sin, you'd go to Hell even though you had made a faith commitment to Christ.

That's why 1 John 1:9 says that we are the ones confessing our sins and He is still faithful to keep on, what? Cleaning us from sin. You see, there has to be a constant cleansing work. There has to be a constant intercession on our behalf. There has to be a constant groaning of the Spirit of God. So we are being kept saved. It isn't just in the plan. It's worked out by the Son and the Spirit.

And that's why Verse 26 says, "Likewise the Spirit also helps our weakness." What does He mean? He means that we can't keep ourselves saved. We're too weak for that. You say, "Well, can't we do it by prayer? Can we just get in our knees, 'Oh, God'? We'll cry out in our prayers and we'll pray like mad." Yeah, we could give it a try. The problem is we don't know what to pray for, right? We don't know what to pray for.

We're going through suffering. We've got struggles with sin and weakness of our flesh. We don't know the future. We can't know what to pray for. "Lord, don't let me do this. Don't let me do that." We don't know. We can't see an hour ahead, a minute ahead. We don't know how to pray. We don't have the right content. It doesn't mean we don't know how to get on our knees or hold our hands. It doesn't mean we don't know how to say, "Dear Lord," and "Amen." It's not talking about form. It's talking about content.

We know now what we should pray for. We don't know how to pray to keep ourselves safe. We don't know how to defend ourselves. We don't know how to pray, 'cause we don't know what's coming. And it's the Lord, you see, who sees something coming and like Peter in Luke 22, He says, "Satan desires to have you." Peter didn't know that. Peter woulda walked by and right into Satan's situation and he coulda been overcome by the thing.

And so the Lord has already anticipated that in His sovereignty and prayed and that's already settled before He even gets there. So we have the Savior and the Spirit interceding for us because we don't know how to pray to maintain our own redemption. We can't pray to keep ourselves saved. Why?

The Spirit helps our infirmities. That's a comprehensive word. It simply means our weaknesses, our weaknesses. That's our fallenness. Not just our weak prayers, but our whole weak existence. Our whole human problem of being in this flesh, this mortal body, this sinful state. How can we keep ourselves saved? We can't, because we don't even know what to pray for. That's such an important truth. And I don't know that Christians really understand that. You see, this is the problem.

When we have taught in years past eternal security, we sort of say, "Well, if you're saved here it's in the plan, you're okay forever." And we have a greed that that is, in fact, true. But have missed, somehow, the marvelous corresponding truths that the reason that is so is because of the continual intercessory work of the Son and the Spirit.

And so we should be offering praise to the Son who intercedes on our behalf and prays or us when Satan would have us. And we should also be grateful that the Spirit of God also helps our weakness, for we couldn't keep ourselves saved, lest divine intercessor stood for us before the throne of God. Great truth. Peter was safe because Christ prayed for him. In Hebrews 7:25, do you remember that verse? "Wherefore He is able to save them to the uttermost that come to God by Him."

What does it mean to be saved to the uttermost? Somebody said, "From the gutter most, to the uttermost." What does it mean to be saved to the uttermost? It means to be saved to the epitome, to the limits. What does that mean? All the way from the moment of salvation, to glory, we are saved to the uttermost. How? Listen to this now. How? "Seeing He ever lives continually to keep on making," what? "Intercession for them."

You see, what keeps the saved is the ever-living, interceding Christ, for such a high priest was fitting for us. No high priest. No intercessory work of Christ, you'll never get to glory. He keeps us by His priestly intercession. Marvelous. And here we find -- and we've celebrated that truth about Christ more than this. Here we find that we not only have Christ in Heaven interceding for us, but we have the Holy Spirit in us interceding for us. Oh, marvelous, marvelous.

We have a faithful high priest in Heaven. We have a faithful high priest in our hearts. For the Spirit Himself makes intercession. Same word as used of Christ in Hebrews, "For us." Beloved, you could never attain to glory. I could never attain to glory. I could never even pray my way through, because I don't even know how to pray to protect myself in the spiritual conflict. I have to have help.

And so I have help from the Savior in Heaven and the Spirit on earth. It's obvious we don't know what to pray for, isn't it? You ever read 2 Corinthians 12 where Paul prayed three times for the Lord to remove the thorn in his flesh? Three times the Lord did what? Nothing. Didn't remove it.

And Paul finally said, "Well, in whatever state I am, therewith to be content." And he learned what all of us should know. We really don't know what to pray for. When we suffer, we say, "Lord, get rid of it immediately if not sooner. I've learned my lesson." *(Laughs)*"Now take it away." But we don't know. We don't know what worse fate would befall us if it weren't for the suffering He puts us through. Trust Him.

Humanly, we don't know how to tap divine resources. We don't know how to pray for the things we ought to pray for. We're so weak. How does the Holy Spirit intercede for us? *(Laughs)*This is tremendous. He makes intercession.

Intercession. What does that mean? Let me see if I can give you just a basic understanding of the Greek term. It's a multiple compound word. It starts with two prepositions and then you have a verb. It basically means -- if I can put it in simple terms -- to rescue someone who finds himself in trouble and has no resources to escape it. It is to rescue someone who finds himself in trouble and has no resource to escape. Now this gives you a whole different understanding of the Heavenly conflict.

This is why Satan continues to work so furiously on believers and to attack so furiously who name the name of Christ. And this is why Satan doesn't just back off and say, "Well, the plan is settled. The person's a Christian. Leave him alone. We can't do a thing about it." But even Satan knows that we are being kept by the power of Christ. We are being kept by the power of the Spirit. And so he wars against the Spirit. And he wars against the living Christ.

Every way he can with all the hosts of Hell that are available so that he may at some point debilitating their keeping work, you see. And so Christ is not just having died on the cross now in Heaven kicking back and watching everything sort of fall into line. He is working to uphold all things, including redemptive things. And the Spirit of God is not finished. He didn't all of a sudden stop doing things when the age of miracles ended at the apostolic era. No, no, no.

He continues in marvelous, miraculous, supernatural ways to carry on the keeping ministry. Who does He do it? He makes intercession. He makes intercession. He pleads to power of God. He comes to us with power to rescue us when we would have no resource for rescue. And would you notice there's an emphasis in Verse 26, "The Spirit Himself, outaw. The Spirit Himself. The Spirit Himself." It's His work. Bless the Spirit. Blessed Spirit. The Spirit Himself. That's important in interpreting this.

When people come along and say, "These are the grunts and groans of tongue speaking and gibberish," that isn't what it's talking about. It's not people; it's the Spirit Himself doing this. How in the world people get that out of here? They don't. They read it in. The Spirit Himself. Not human groans and grunts and tongues and ecstatic gibberish. "You would be just as well to have the flowers speaking in tongues," in the earlier portion of the chapter.

These are groanings that cannot -- would you notice -- that cannot be uttered. Not groanings which are uttered. But groanings which can't be uttered. They are the divine sighs of the interceding Holy Spirit as He prays to the Father for the full glory of fallen creatures who could never get there if it weren't for His continual intercession. What a blessed thought.

The Holy Spirit sees and understands our flesh, understands our weakness, that not only do we sin, but we don't even know how to pray to defend ourselves. And the blessed Holy Spirit in your yearns for our glory. He yearns for our being in the image of Christ. This is the heart of God the Father. This is the heart of God the Son. This is the heart of God the Spirit.

You say, "Well do these groanings have content?" You better believe it. They just transcend language. They're groanings which cannot be uttered. They are sighs longing for Glory for the redeemed, but they can't find human words. This is inter-Trinitarian communication. That's why ultimately, we don't know what He's saying. But He's praying for us.

I don't know what Jesus said to the Father when He prayed for Peter that Satan wouldn't be able to get him. But there's a communion within the Trinity. Oh, what a tremendous day. I'll never be lost to God. the only way I could ever be lost to God and not make it from justification to glorification would be if Christ all of a sudden got dethroned and no longer could sit at the right hand of God interceding for me and if the Spirit of God was debilitated and longer could cry out intercessory sighs before God on my behalf. And that can't happen, folks, for God is eternal.

I believe that this presents really the fulfillment of the words of Paul in Philippians 2, where it says as we saw this morning, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling and then this." In other words, He's saying, "Keep working out that which is in you. Keep following in obedience. Keep living the life that God would have." And He calls us to do that, but then says in the next verse, "For it is God who works in you both to will and do of His good pleasure." Isn't that wonderful?

The Spirit of God is working in us to bring about the perfect will of God in a sustained, strenuous effort. The Spirit of God works to produce the end result. I believe this is what Paul in Philippians 1:19 calls, "The supply of the Spirit." It is the supply of the Spirit that He's there interceding on our behalf and consequently God is supplying us with all we need to face all we face and make it to glory.

And I believe this defines for us in clear terms the sealing work of the Spirit. How does the Spirit seal us? By this constant groaning intercession on our behalf. He seals us. Now what do you mean by seal? Well in the Bible, a seal is a sign of authenticity.

In other words, if you wanted to have something and you want to say, "This is the real thing," they put a seal on it that it was the real thing. It is also a sign of a completed transaction when someone sold

a piece of land, as Jeremiah 32 uses it this way. There was a seal to indicate that this was a transaction completed to show ownership like a pink slip. Also, the seal in the Scripture was used of authority.

When someone went as a delegated representative of a monarch, he would take the monarch seal. And when he put that seal down, he represented that monarch. But primarily the seal in Scripture is the sign of security. In other words, your sealed in a secure sense.

The best Old Testament illustration of this simple truth is Daniel 6. And it might be worth a brief look, Daniel 6, as we come to kind of a conclusion in our thinking this section. But Daniel 6:16 is so wonderful, "Then the king commanded they brought Daniel and cast him into the den of lions."

Now the king spoke and said to Daniel, "Thy God whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee." The put him in the den of lions in Verse 17. "A stone was brought, laid on the mouth of the den, and the king sealed with his own signet and the signet of his lords that the purpose might not be," what's the next word? "Changed." That's it.

And when it says in the Scripture that your sealed with the Spirit, that means that God's purpose begun in salvation can never be, what? Changed. But the seal is the Spirit who assures that by His ongoing intercessory work. Tremendous. I believe that's why the Bible calls him the Spirit of Promise, the Spirit of Promise, for He is the reason that the promise of ultimate redemption is fulfilled.

Now let's go to Verse 27. This absolutely thrilling. Verse 26, we have the Spirit interceding for us. Verse 27, we find out what happens. "And He that searcheth the hearts." Who's that? Want to know who it is? Listen. First Samuel 16:7, "Man looks at the outward appearance but the Lord," what? "Looks at the heart."

1 Kings 8:30, "Thou alone knowest the hearts of all the sons of men." 1 Chronicles 8:29, "The Lord searches every heart and understands every motive." Psalm 1:39, "Oh Lord, thou hast searched me and known me. Thou knowest when I sit down and when I rise up." Proverbs 15:11, "Sheol that is the grave, and Avadon Hell lie open before the Lord." Acts 1:24, "Lord, thou knowest everyone's heart."

1 Corinthians 4:5, "The Lord will bring to light what is hidden in darkness, and expose the motives of men's heart." Hebrews 4:13, "There is no creature hidden from God's sight. All things are open and laid bare before the eyes of Him with whom we have to do." Who is the one who searches the heart? God. Verse 26, "The Holy Spirit prays."

Verse 27, "God hears." "And He that searches the hearts," that's God. That's just a name for God, the heart searcher. He knows what is the mind of the Spirit. You say, "Does God hear the Spirit?"

that's what it's saying. Yeah. In the inter-Trinitarian communion, God hears the Spirit. Nothing's lost. *(Laughs)*

It would be one thing for the Spirit to be interceding for us. It'd be another thing if God wasn't listening. But He is. He hears everything. And then this, "Because the Spirit makes intercession for the saints according to," what? "The will of God." Great thought. You may not know the will of God. He does. You may not know how to pray. He does. *(Laughs)*Comforting, isn't it?

You ever read in the Bible, "Pray in the Spirit"? You know what that means? That doesn't mean flip out. *(Laughter)*You what pray in the Spirit means? Learn to pray according to the will of God like the Spirit prays; that's what it means. Pray in the Spirit. The Spirit always prays according to the will of God. God always knows what the Spirit's praying, 'cause He's always praying in accordance with His will. Why? Because in the Trinity there is perfect harmony.

So the Spirit intercedes according to God's will. The Son intercedes according to God's will. And God hears and understands all their intercession; therefore, responds and by their interceding ministries, we are kept. That's great. So when some guy comes along and says, "Well, I believe you can lose your salvation," he strikes a blast against the work of the Savior and the work of the Spirit. That is not just some small disagreement in the church. That is to question the power of the Son of God and the Spirit of God.

God hears the Spirit. He always prays according to the will of God. And you know what happens? Verse 28, "And we know." How do we know? Because of what we just read, folks. You can't pull Verse 28 out of space. People go, "And we know that all these *(mumbles)*." And they make that verse as if it's sort of isolated from everything in the Scripture. No, no, no.

We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose. And what is His purpose? To ultimately bring us to glory, to conform us to Christ. And everything works for that. Everything works toward that. Everything works toward that. Why? "Oh, it just does." *(Laughter)*No, it doesn't just does, or however you say that. *(Laughter)*

The reason it does is because of the intercessory work of the Spirit of God. Put the glory where it belongs, folks. You can't just yank that verse out of there and stick it in some kind of isolated setting. The only reason all things work together for good is not because we're so wonderful, not because we have in our own humanness the ability to make them work that way. The only reason things work together for good is because God ultimately is leading us to good in glory and the Spirit is keeping us on that track by His marvelous intercession work within our hearts. Thrilling, thrilling.

And that, dear ones, is the guarantee of glory. And we're gonna go into it more deeply in our next time. Let's bow in prayer. Father, we're so thrilled to understand this profound passage. Oh, how

wonderful it is that our redemption is not just some celestial plan that cranks along independent of actual involvement on Your part. But rather it is a plan being fulfilled by the ongoing power of the blessed Spirit. Father, we groan, creation groans.

The Spirit groans 'till that day when Revelation 20:2-3 is complete. There shall be no more curse. We long for that day when justification is brought to glorification. And we know we're gonna get there. Oh, not because of us. But because the Spirit helps our weakness, for He makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

And those un-uttered groanings that go from the heart of the blessed Spirit to the heart of God the Father are heard and answered because they are always according to Your will. And because of that, all things continually are working together for our glory because we have been called according to Your purpose and that purpose is being fulfilled in us. Oh, what gratitude fills our hearts?

Thank You for securing us with the same gracious work that is all on Your part with which You also saved us. We had really no part in Your gracious salvation. We had no part in Your gracious work of keeping. For we were too weak to save ourselves, we're equally too weak to keep ourselves saved.

Thank You that all things, even our suffering and sin, dealt by the Spirit and the Son still works together to bring us to glory. And nothing shall ever separate us from Your love, which ultimately will conform us to the very image of our blessed Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Just in a moment of silent prayer, I think this is new to many of you. The Lord's taught me things. Even tonight as I've been talking, I've seen things in clearer perspective than before. And I feel in my heart a great amount of gratitude to God. You see, knowing that I'm secure isn't something that makes me trifle with sin.

It isn't something that makes me play around with evil. It isn't something that says to me, "Now that you're secure, go out and do what you want." It has the very opposite effect. I find myself saying God has been so gracious. Christ is so gracious. The Spirit is so gracious that I want to do all I can to give glory to Them and honor and worship and praise in obedience. I know that's your attitude, too.

Spend a moment, a moment of thanks, of worship for a soul securing work as a blessed Holy Spirit who groans with all the rest of us and creation, waiting for the glorious liberation of the Sons of God. Just a moment of thanks. And then it maybe that there are some of you here who have not known Christ. You've not been saved.

You've not come to redemption, to justification, had your sins forgiven and cleansed, been given the promise, the hope of eternal life. And you've heard about this soul-securing salvation, this ultimate

salvation that leads to glory in the presence of Jesus Christ forever and ever. Your heart hungers for that.

The Bible says, "If you ask, you'll receive." You ask in faith confession the Lordship of Christ, asking that He would forgive your sin, grant that salvation, it becomes yours as a gift. All you need to do is ask in the quietness of your own heart.

Father, meet us in a very special and personal way as we come to a conclusion in this hour, and teach us what we need to learn, and give us grateful hearts. We praise you. We started out tonight worshiping. We want to finish the same way, with thanksgiving. We pray in Christ's name, Amen.

Available online at: http://www.gty.org
COPYRIGHT (C) 2013 Grace to You
You may reproduce this Grace to You content for non-commercial purposes in accordance with Grace to You's Copyright Policy (http://www.gty.org/connect/copyright).